

Senate File 225 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 225

BY McCOY

A BILL FOR

1 An Act establishing employment protections for employees absent
2 from work due to adoptions and making penalties applicable.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 216.2, Code 2015, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsections:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 01. "*Absence due to an adoption*" includes
4 an absence in order to prepare for or participate in the
5 adoption of a child, or to care for a newly adopted child
6 within the first year of adoption.

7 NEW SUBSECTION. 001. "*Adoption*" means the process of
8 securing legal custody of a child.

9 NEW SUBSECTION. 0001. "*Child*" means a person under eighteen
10 years of age.

11 Sec. 2. Section 216.6, subsection 2, unnumbered paragraph
12 1, Code 2015, is amended to read as follows:

13 Employment policies relating to pregnancy, ~~and~~ childbirth,
14 and adoption shall be governed by the following:

15 Sec. 3. Section 216.6, subsection 2, paragraphs a, b, d, and
16 e, Code 2015, are amended to read as follows:

17 a. A written or unwritten employment policy or practice
18 which excludes from employment applicants or employees because
19 of the employee's pregnancy or adoption is a prima facie
20 violation of this chapter.

21 b. Disabilities caused or contributed to by the employee's
22 pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, and recovery therefrom,
23 or an employee's absence due to an adoption, are, for all
24 job-related purposes, temporary disabilities and shall be
25 treated as such under any health or temporary disability
26 insurance or sick leave plan available in connection with
27 employment. Written and unwritten employment policies and
28 practices involving matters such as the commencement and
29 duration of leave, the availability of extensions, the accrual
30 of seniority, and other benefits and privileges, reinstatement,
31 and payment under any health or temporary disability insurance
32 or sick leave plan, formal or informal, shall be applied to a
33 disability due to the employee's pregnancy or giving birth, or
34 an employee's absence due to an adoption, on the same terms and
35 conditions as they are applied to other temporary disabilities.

d. An employer shall not terminate the employment of a person disabled by pregnancy or absent due to an adoption because of the employee's pregnancy or absence.

e. Where a leave is not available or a sufficient leave is not available under any health or temporary disability insurance or sick leave plan available in connection with employment, the employer of the pregnant or adopting employee shall not refuse to grant to the employee who is disabled by the pregnancy, or absent due to an adoption, a leave of absence if the leave of absence is for the period that the employee is disabled because of the employee's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, or preparing for or participating in the adoption of a child, or caring for a newly adopted child within the first year of adoption, or for eight weeks, whichever is less. However, the employee must provide timely notice of the period of leave requested and the employer must approve any change in the period requested before the change is effective. Before granting the leave of absence, the employer may require ~~that~~ one of the following:

20 (1) That the employee's disability resulting from pregnancy
21 be verified by medical certification stating that the employee
22 is not able to reasonably perform the duties of employment.

(2) That the employee's adoption of a child be verified by documentation of the adoption and that the employee certify in writing that the employee will not be able to reasonably perform the duties of employment because the employee will be preparing for or participating in the adoption of a child, or caring for a newly adopted child within the first year of adoption.

EXPLANATION

30 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
31 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

32 Code chapter 216, the Iowa civil rights Act, provides
33 certain employment protections to employees relating to
34 pregnancy and childbirth. This bill provides that these
35 protections also apply to employees who are absent from work

1 due to an adoption. The bill defines "adoption" as the
2 process of securing legal custody of a child. The bill defines
3 "absence due to an adoption" to include an absence in order
4 to prepare for or participate in the adoption of a child, or
5 to care for a newly adopted child within the first year of
6 adoption.

7 The bill provides that an employment policy or practice
8 which excludes from employment applicants or employees because
9 of the employee's adoption is a prima facie violation of Code
10 chapter 216.

11 The bill provides that an employee's absence due to an
12 adoption is, for job-related purposes, a temporary disability
13 and shall be treated as such under any health or temporary
14 disability insurance or sick leave plan available in connection
15 with employment. Employment policies and practices involving
16 certain matters such as the commencement and duration of leave,
17 the accrual of seniority, and payment under any health or
18 temporary disability insurance or sick leave plan shall be
19 applied to a disability due to the employee's absence due to an
20 adoption on the same terms and conditions as they are applied
21 to other temporary disabilities.

22 The bill prohibits an employer from terminating the
23 employment of a person absent due to an adoption because of the
24 employee's absence.

25 Where a leave is not available or a sufficient leave is not
26 available under any health or temporary disability insurance
27 or sick leave plan available in connection with employment,
28 the bill prohibits an employer of an adopting employee from
29 refusing to grant to the employee a leave of absence if
30 the leave of absence is for the period that the employee is
31 preparing for or participating in the adoption of a child,
32 or caring for a newly adopted child within the first year of
33 adoption, or for eight weeks, whichever is less. The employee
34 must provide timely notice of the period of leave requested.
35 The employer may first require that the employee's adoption

1 of a child be verified by documentation and that the employee
2 certify that the employee will not able to reasonably perform
3 the duties of employment because the employee will be preparing
4 for or participating in the adoption of a child, or caring for
5 a newly adopted child within the first year of adoption.

6 Penalty provisions for discriminatory employment practices
7 are made applicable to violations of the employment protections
8 granted by the bill.